

To the Honorable Courts

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It's been 21 long years I have been imprisoned. 21 years of thinking, 21 years of wishing things had gone differently. I am ashamed to admit that the first 15 of those years I spent making excuses for myself, for my sons, for our actions. Today I can genuinely tell you I take full responsibility for the crimes I committed against each victim and Lord knows it weighs on me and haunts me everyday I used to make excuses because I was not present during certain parts of the crime, the parts I personally deemed to be the worst acts committed but I've come to realize that as their mother, better yet as a human being in general I should have never been willing to participate in those acts, therefore I should have taken action to stop it had I been willing to go against my sons and notify authorities. John Cummins could have remained unharmed and Samuel Lam would still be alive, and their families would have been spared the pain and suffering because of my choices. Every single day I think of my victims and one thing I could of said or done differently to change the direction of events, and over the years I can honestly say my thinking has changed completely as far as "would haves" or "should haves". I have spiritually and emotionally grown to the point that I can no longer relate to the person I use to be, in fact it disgust me to try, not only do I think about my victims but I think about my sons, particularly my youngest Philip who was only 15 at the time, and how they see me as a mother and what you, who is reading this is thinking of me as a person. Sometimes I believe in grace and mercy and miracles of second chances but frankly other times it shames me to even conceive of a second chance when a life was taken and the health of another. Which is why if I were to receive mercy from the courts I wouldn't waste a moment doing anything other than being the best person I can be and serving a greater purpose and giving back to the community as best as I can. I am grateful for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Vallia Friend